MARVEL

The Sensational SPIDER-MAN®

FERAL

Aguirre-Sacasa • Medina • Crain

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Everyone's Favorite Wall-Crawler Embarks on a Bloodcurdling Journey into the Heart of Darkness!

Strange changes are coming over Spidey's animalistic foes — including Dr. Curt Connors, John Jameson and Felicia Hardy — awakening the beast that dwells within them all. Sure, Spidey's beaten the Lizard, Man-Wolf and the Black Cat before, but they've never been more vicious than they are now!

Collecting *Sensational Spider-Man #23-27* — written by **Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa** (*Marvel Knights 4*), and illustrated by **Angel Medina** (*Spawn*) and **Clayton Crain** (*Ghost Rider*).

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ALL-NEW CREATIVE TEAM! ALL-NEW TITLE!

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MARY JANE WATSON-PARKER.

THE WOMAN OF YOUR DREAMS.

WAKING FROM A FITFUL SLEEP.

REACHING FOR HER HUSBAND AND FINDING COLD SHEETS.

Uh...

PADDING ACROSS A FLOOR THAT IS HARD STEEL.

WONDERING WHEN THE LAST TIME SHE SLEPT THROUGH THE NIGHT WAS.

PETER...?

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HELLO...?

PETER, ARE YOU--?

I'M HERE.

JEEZUS, PETER, YOU SCARED ME.

WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP?

COULDN'T SLEEP.

FELT... SOMETHING WRONG.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

...

GO BACK TO BED, MARY JANE...

...I'M WORKING TONIGHT.

PETER PARKER.

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN.

HASN'T SLEPT THROUGH THE NIGHT SINCE HE WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL.

LATER. JUST BEFORE DAWN.

IT'S POURING IN NEW YORK CITY TODAY.

MARY JANE HAS TO BE IN MAKEUP BY 6:30.

EVEN SOMEONE AS BEAUTIFUL AS HER.

PETER AND HIS AUNT MAY ARE ALREADY AWAKE, SIPPING COFFEE LIKE MEMBERS OF THE LIVING DEAD.

IT'S NOT EVEN FIVE-THIRTY, YOU TWO...

THE OLDER YOU GET, THE LESS REST YOU NEED.

MORNING, DEAR.

MORNING, MAY.

AND HOW ARE *YOU* DOING THIS MORNING, TIGER?

ROUGH NIGHT?

DIE!

DIE!!

KLANK

ARGGGHHH!

ARRGGH!

PRETTY ROUGH, YEAH.

BUT WHATEVER...

I'VE HAD ROUGHER.

DR. CURT CONNORS.

TOILING IN THE BOWELS OF THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM.

SMART ENOUGH TO HAVE CURED CANCER--

RIIINNNGGG

--ONCE, A LIFETIME AGO.

'LO, THIS IS CONNORS.

A MAN AT WAR WITH HIMSELF.

FOR THE MOMENT, WINNING.

...

I'M A *HERPETOLOGIST*, DR. TREYMAN, NOT A GEOLOGIST...

...BUT *OF COURSE* I'LL TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR ROCK.

FOR THE MOMENT.

BRONX ZOO

YOU'RE WITH THE *PRESS?* AND ALREADY HERE?

SWEET MARY, YOU GUYS ARE LIKE *VULTURES*, AREN'T YOU?

WHY, TOOMES? *WHY* PICK THOSE PEOPLE UP JUST TO *DROP* THEM?

YOU... YOU WANT A *REASON?* YOU *ALWAYS* WANT REASONS, DON'T YOU?

ACTUALLY... NOT AT *ALL.*

WHICH WAY TO THE *MONKEYS?*

STRAIGHT AHEAD, TO YOUR LEFT.

HOPE YOU GOT A STRONG STOMACH.

LIKE *IRON.*

THANKS, BY THE WAY.

PETER PARKER.

PART-TIME TEACHER. PART-TIME PHOTOGRAPHER.

FULL-TIME SCIENTIST.

WHAT MADE THEM DO THAT? THE MONKEYS?

GO BERSERK AND RIP EACH OTHER APART? NO IDEA--

--BUT IF YOU'D HEARD 'EM...LIKE BABIES SCREAMING.

CLICK!

WHAT I GOTTA WORRY ABOUT NOW IS--

--WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE CORPSES?

I WAS HUNGRY, SPIDER-MAN.

I WAS HUNGRY AND VULTURES ONLY EAT DEAD THINGS.

...

MY ASSIGNMENT EDITOR SAID SOMETHING ABOUT RHINOS, TOO.

OH, MY GOD...

WHO? NO, GOD WASN'T ANYWHERE NEAR THIS...

THEY KILLED THEMSELVES. RAMMED AGAINST THE CONCRETE WALL OVER AND OVER TILL THEIR NECKS BROKE.

WH...WHY?

YOU TELL US. AND KEEP IN MIND IT WASN'T JUST THE RHINOS AND MONKEYS.

OH, THEY GOT IT THE WORST, THAT'S FOR SURE, BUT ALL THE ANIMALS WENT CRAZY.

REALLY?

YEAH, AND THE FUNNY THING IS...

"...THERE WASN'T EVEN A *FULL MOON* LAST NIGHT."

JOHN JAMESON.

THE YOUNGEST MAN EVER ACCEPTED TO NASA'S ASTRONAUT PROGRAM.

I'M SORRY, JOHN, BUT YOUR FATHER'S STILL IN THAT MEETING...

WHO REMEMBERS A TIME WHEN HIS FUTURE WAS AS **LIMITLESS** AS THE NIGHT SKY. WHEN PEOPLE TALKED TO HIM ABOUT BEING **PRESIDENT** ONE DAY.

IT'S ALL RIGHT, ROSE, I DON'T MIND **WAITING.**

BUT THAT WAS BEFORE HIS TRIP TO THE MOON.

IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE ANYWHERE *ELSE* TO BE...

BEFORE HE FOUND THE ALIEN GEMSTONE THAT *INFECTED* HIM.

BEFORE, IN OTHER WORDS--

...TELL HIM YOU STOPPED BY IF HE CALLS IN, MARY JANE.

--THE WOLF.

I'D APPRECIATE THAT, SELMA.

I DIDN'T *REALLY* THINK HE'D BEEN HERE, BUT I JUST FINISHED A PHOTO SHOOT DOWN THE BLOCK AND I THOUGHT--

MARY JANE.

--WHY *NOT* TRY A STAB IN THE DARK.

...

JOHN? JOHN JAMESON?

I'LL... I'LL CALL YOU LATER, MJ.

GOD, IT'S BEEN *YEARS*, JOHN. HOW...HOW ARE YOU?

I'M ALL RIGHT. YOU?

YOU LOOK *GREAT.*

THANKS, THANK YOU.

I'M GOOD. *BUSY*, BUT... BUSY'S BETTER THAN *NOT* BUSY, YOU KNOW?

YES. YES, I *DO* KNOW.

AND PETER?

SAME AS ALWAYS. YOU KNOW...

...LIVING THE *DREAM.*

OH? WHAT DREAM IS THAT?

JOHN JAMESON SEES IT IN HER FACE.

ACTUALLY, JOHN, I'M...

...I'M FEELING A LITTLE UNDER THE WEATHER, CAN WE--?

--MEET UP LATER? OF COURSE, MARY JANE.

PITY.

GREAT, SO I'LL CALL YOU AND...

...MAYBE THE THREE OF US CAN GET TOGETHER FOR DINNER OR SOMETHING.

THAT SOUNDS WONDERFUL.

SHE'S NOT GOING TO CALL, HE KNOWS.

BUT THAT'S ALL RIGHT.

YOUR SCARF, MARY JANE...

BECAUSE THEY WILL MEET UP LATER.

FOR DINNER OR SOMETHING.

SOMETIMES, EVEN SUPER HEROES TAKE THE SUBWAY.

JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE.

THE TINGLING BEGINS AT THE PLACE WHERE PETER'S SPINE AND NECK MEET.

IT MEANS--

--SOMEWHERE, THERE'S A THREAT NEARBY.

HEY, DO YOU MIND?

PARDON ME--

--SORRY, I JUST NEED TO--

'SCUSE YOU.

HEY, CHUMP--

SORRY, BUT I--

--I REALLY, *REALLY* HAVE TO--

--FIND...

WHOA.

PLEASE, MISTER. I KNOW I'M NOT *SUPPOSED* TO...

...BUT HE'S BEEN ACTING REAL, *REAL* SICK.

I'LL...I'LL GET OFF AT THE NEXT STOP, MISTER, ONLY...DON'T TELL THE SUBWAY PEOPLE, OKAY?

THAT'S WHAT'S TRIGGERING MY SPIDEY-SENSE? A *PUPPY?*

MAN, WHAT'S YOUR *PROBLEM?* GIVE THE KID A BREAK, SHE'S NOT *HURTING* ANYBODY.

RUFF?

NO, I KNOW--SHE'S FINE--I JUST...

OKAY, *WEIRD.*

YOUR *WHAT? WHAT* DID YOU SAY?

PETER PARKER.

CONFUSED AS EVER.

THAT NIGHT.

IT'S STILL RAINING.

ON THE GUILTY--

OH GOD.

OHGODOH GODOHGODOH GODOHGODOH GOD...

--AND THE INNOCENT, ALIKE.

HOLD ON, PETER, LET ME GO INTO THE OTHER ROOM...

--STRING OF VIOLENT CRIMES CONTINUE UNCHECKED AROUND THE CITY. THE FOLLOWING FOOTAGE WAS SHOT A LITTLE OVER AN HOUR AGO--

STAR

--IN IT, YOU'LL SEE FOUR MEN ATTACKING A FIFTH WITH WHAT LOOK LIKE **MACHETES.** ONLY THE LAST-SECOND ARRIVAL OF SUSAN RICHARDS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR--

MY GOODNESS.

...SORRY ABOUT THAT, SEXY, I COULDN'T ***HEAR.***

YOU WERE SAYING SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR SPIDER-SENSE?

YEAH, THAT IT'S TOTALLY *MISFIRING.* NOT LIKE WITH MORLUN OR FROM MY NEW POWERS, BUT...

...I DON'T KNOW. IT JUST KEEPS GOING *OFF.* LIKE A CONSTANT *RINGING* BENEATH MY NEOCORTEX, YOU KNOW?

NEOCORTEX, RIGHT.

LISTEN, MAYBE YOU'RE SICK, MAYBE YOU SHOULD COME HOME.

NEGATIVE, HOTSTUFF. I'D *LOVE* TO--AND GOD KNOWS I'M GETTING THE SNIFFLES--

THE WHAT? WHO ARE YOU, CINDY BRADY?

--BUT IT'S LIKE EVERY CREEP AND HIS BROTHER HAVE DECIDED TO COME OUT AND PLAY IN THE RAIN.

OH MY GOD--SPEAKING OF WHICH--GUESS WHO I BUMPED INTO AT THE BUGLE?

ACTUALLY, MJ? MY OTHER LINE'S BEEPING AND--

--OH, MAN, I REALLY GOTTA TAKE THIS.

WHAT?

HELLO? HELLO?

...GOD, NICE TALKING TO YOU, TOO.

WAS THAT PETER, DEAR?
IT WAS, YEAH, AND HE SAYS HELLO, BUT--
--CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING, MAY?
ALWAYS, MARY JANE. ABOUT ANYTHING.
THANKS, MAY, I JUST...
...DO YOU LIKE *LIVING* HERE? IN AVENGERS TOWER?
AS OPPOSED TO...?
I DON'T KNOW, SOME *NEW* PLACE WE FIND?
WHERE WE HAVE MORE *PRIVACY*. WHERE IT'S *PETER'S* NAME ON THE LEASE AND NOT SPIDER-MAN'S, YOU KNOW? WHERE IT'S JUST *US*, OUR FAMILY.
WELL, I MUST ADMIT, AS FOND AS I AM OF THAT NICE MR. JARVIS FELLOW, I *DO* LIKE THE IDEA OF BEING DOWN CLOSER TO THE...
...OH, DEAR. MARY JANE...

...WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT *KNIFE?*

I...I...

"I KNOW IT'S YOU, DOC, THE NAME *CURT CONNORS* CAME UP ON MY CALLER I.D., SO *SAY* SOMETHING ALREADY!"

PETER...

PETER, I'M SO AFRAID...

DON'T BE, DOC. JUST--JUST STAY CALM AND TELL ME WHAT'S *WRONG.*

EVERYTHING, PETER...

=UHNFF=

IT'S *STARTING* AGAIN... I CAN *FEEL* IT...LIKE SOMEONE *JABBING KNIVES* INTO MY STUMP...

OKAY, DOC? *LISTEN* TO ME. DO YOU HAVE YOUR PILLS? YOUR *MEDS?*

THWIP

NO!!! NO, *YOU* LISTEN TO *ME!* IT'S *TOO LATE* FOR THAT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, DOC? WHAT ARE YOU *SAYING?*

PETER, I THINK--I'M *AFRAID*-- I MAY HAVE *HURT* SOMEONE...

WHERE ARE YOU? AT THE MUSEUM?

H-*HOME.* MY APARTMENT...

AND PETER? BILLY'S HERE...

YOUR SON IS?

ALL RIGHT, I-I'M ON MY WAY, BUT I NEED YOU TO STAY ON THE PHONE WITH ME, OKAY?

...

DOC? YOU THERE, DOC?

...RRRAARRGGH!

DOC? DOC?!

OH, GOD.

...YESSSSSS...

...WE'RE BOTH HERE, PETERRRRR...

3 OFF

⇒HUNF⇐

⇒HUNF⇐

⇒HUNF⇐

FIGHT IT, CONNORS! FIGHT IT! FIGHT IT! FIGHT IT!

TALK TO ME, DOC--WHAT'S HAPPENING?

CONNORS? CONNORS?!?

I'M ALMOST THERE, JUST-- HANG ON UNTIL I GET THERE, DOC. AND--

--OH, GOD--

--AND WE'LL BEAT THIS TOGETHER.

-HUNF-

-HUNF-

-HUNF-

-HUNF-

FERAL

PART ONE: "COLD-BLOODED"

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NEXT: THE LIZARD AND THE CAT!!!

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The Sensational SPIDER-MAN

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WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?
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DETECTIVE JONAS FOGG.

INVESTIGATING A MUTILATION AND MURDER AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM.

A BAD DAY GETTING WORSE.

WHERE THE HELL'S THE REST OF HIM?

THING IS, DETECTIVE--

--BITE MARKS INDICATE THE REST OF DR. TREYMAN WAS *EATEN.*

SO--WHAT-- WE GOT A *GHOUL* ON THE LOOSE? A FREAKIN' CANNIBAL?

HAH-HAH, DETECTIVE. YOU'RE A *RIOT.*

BITE MARKS AND SALIVA SAMPLES INDICATE AN *ANIMAL* DID THIS.

AN ANIMAL? I'M *INTRIGUED.*

CAN SOMEONE GET ME A REFILL HERE?

WELL, THEN, THIS SHOULD *FASCINATE* YOU:

THE SALIVA'S NOT *MAMMALIAN,* IT'S *REPTILIAN.*

SWELL. SO EITHER THERE'S A *KOMODO DRAGON* ON THE LOOSE OR...

OR?

THE MUSEUM'S LOG SAYS TREYMAN CALLED *CURT CONNORS* TO COME CHECK OUT AN ASTEROID OR SOMETHING.

POLICE

EXHIBIT A, DETECTIVE. WE'RE *DUSTING* FOR PRINTS. TREYMAN'S *AND* CONNORS'.

CURT CONNORS...?

SCIENTIST WHO LOST AN ARM, TRIED TO GROW IT BACK, TURNED INTO THE LIZARD? WHO WAS ONE OF TREYMAN'S *CO-WORKERS?*

WHERE'S THAT DAMN *COFFEE?*

HE HAVE AN OFFICE HERE? THAT WE SHOULD CHECK?

HE DOES--IN THE BASEMENT-- AND I *ALREADY* CHECKED. IT'S EMPTY, ALL RIGHT.

THANKS FOR THIS.

SO WE'RE THINKING THE LIZARD'S BACK?

CHERYL, YOU THERE?

BACK AND *EATING* PEOPLE, YEAH.

"ANYBODY GOT SPIDER-MAN'S CELL PHONE NUMBER?"

This *REALLY* stinks.

Not just the rain (though that *DOES* indeed stink)--

--and not just the fact that my *SPIDER-SENSE* is on the fritz (though *THAT* stinks, too)--

--mostly what totally stinks is that I think my buddy, Curt Connors, is *OFF THE WAGON* again.

KER-RASH!

Yep. *BIG TIME.*

HEY, DOC. LONG TIME NO DROOL.

RRAHHHRRR!!

WHOA-- YEAH--GOOD TO SEE YOU, TOO.

SLAMM!

RRRRARRRGH!

SO HOW'S THAT *SPEECH* IMPEDIMENT OF YOURS, DOC? THAT *LISP*--

--AAARRGHHH!!

WHAT--?

Oh, you're *KIDDING* me.

FERAL PART TWO: CAT SCRATCH FEVER

ROBERTO AGUIRRE-SACASA	ANGEL MEDINA	SCOTT HANNA	AVALON'S DAN KEMP	CORY PETIT	AXEL ALONSO	WARREN SIMONS	JOE QUESADA	DAN BUCKLEY
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WHO ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE? LI'L LIZARD?

RRRRRRRR...

ARGGHH!!!

Stupid.

STUPID STUPID STUPID.

Off. Gotta get him--

--OFF, DOC!!!

And taking some of *ME* in his jaws.

SMASH!

Bad. This is--

--AMATEUR.

WHAT IS IT, HONEY-BUNNY?

COUPLE OF GATORS, MYRTLE.

GET MY GUN, WOULDJA?

NO.

YO, DOC?

DOC!

Gotta--

--gotta get them AWAY from the people.

THAT'S RIGHT, DOC, SMELL MY BLOOD.

SMELL IT AND FOLLOW ME.

USELESS.

My one shoulder's USELESS.

And guess what?

LIZARDS can climb walls, too.

Losing BLOOD--

Stay FOCUSED, man--

--get to the roof and get HELP--

SPIDER-MAN, SPIDER-MAN, DOES WHATEVER A SPIDER CAN...

--call the AVENGERS.

SOME SPOILED BRAT FLUSHES SOME BABY ALLIGATOR DOWN SOME DAMN SEWER...

--I don't need HELP--

--I need a MIRACLE.

WELL, WELL, WELL...

...WOULD YOU CALL THIS *BAD* LUCK OR *GOOD* LUCK?

The Black Cat?

FELICIA?

YOU LOOK *TERRIBLE*, PETEY.

WHAT HAPPENED? DID RED CATCH YOU WITH ANOTHER WOMAN?

NOT... FUNNY...

WHAT, THEN? ANOTHER MAN?

BE...

...BEHIND ME...

RRRAARRGGHH...

OH, I SEE NOW. YOUR PROBLEM'S NOT *RED*--

--IT'S *GREEN.*

STAND ASIDE, PETER. I'VE BEEN *ITCHING* TO DIG MY CLAWS INTO SOMETHING *WARM* ALL NIGHT LONG.

WAIT, FELICIA, YOU DON'T--

RRRRRRAARRR!!

RRRRRRAARRR!

CRACKK!

UHNFF!

SLAP!!

GOOD, DOCTOR CONNORS. I LIKE A NICE PIECE OF *TAIL* AS MUCH AS THE NEXT GIRL.

CAN I HAVE ANOTHER?

RRRRHARRRRRRR...

"HELLO? MARY JANE?"

INTERLUDE ONE: AVENGERS TOWER.

BEEP BEEP

STAR

YES?

IT'S JOHN, MJ. JOHN JAMESON.

FANCY DIGS. YOU AND PETE MUST BE DOING WELL.

UH, I *GUESS* SO, BUT WHAT ARE YOU...

...I MEAN, WHAT CAN I *DO* FOR YOU, JOHN?

WAS THAT THE BUZZER, DEAR?

I FOUND A *SCARF* YOU DROPPED AT THE *DAILY BUGLE* AND I WAS HOPING...

...LOOK, IT'S *RAINING*, CAN I COME UP?

YOU MEAN NOW? 'CAUSE PETER'S NOT HOME AND...

...COULDN'T YOU JUST, YOU KNOW, *LEAVE IT* WITH THE DOORMAN?

IS THAT LITTLE JOHNNY JAMESON?

YEAH, IT IS. AND IS THIS...MAY?

YES, JOHN, AND YOU MUST BE **SOAKED**...ENOUGH CHITCHAT. YOU COME ON UP AND I'LL FIX US ALL A HOT POT OF TEA.

THAT SOUNDS LOVELY.

I'M BUZZING YOU IN...

...

WHAT, WAS THAT *BAD*, DEAR? ARE YOU *ANGRY?*

YES-- *NO*--I DON'T KNOW...

"I DEFINITELY FEEL...*WEIRD* SOMEHOW. LIKE SOMETHING'S *WRONG* WITH JOHN."

GO ON UP. THE SIXTEENTH FLOOR.

IS THAT...?

...YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING *VODKA?* ON THE JOB?

"OH, DEAR."

OR MAYBE IT'S JUST *ME.* MAYBE I'M JUST ON *EDGE* 'CAUSE PETER'S NOT ANSWERING HIS PHONE AND TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT THE WHOLE CITY DECIDED TO GO *BONKERS...*

MR. JARVIS TOLD ME THAT THE AVENGERS ARE ALL OUT TRYING TO HELP THE POLICE.

"WAIT, *ALL* OF THE AVENGERS ARE GONE?

"BUT...*JARVIS* IS HERE, AT LEAST?"

NAUGHTY--

-UHNFF-

--NAUGHTY!!

"NO, DEAR. HE WENT TO CHECK ON HIS SISTER ON LONG ISLAND."

SO WE'RE *ALONE* IN THIS PART OF THE BUILDING?

OH, *BRILLIANT,* THAT'S JUST--

INTERLUDE TWO: ALONG THE WEST SIDE HIGHWAY.

HUNGRY.

HUNGRYHUNGRY HUNGRYHUNGRY...

VERMIN.

BACK IN HIS HOMETOWN.

LOOKING FOR HIS NEXT MEAL.

HUNNNNNGGGGRRRYYYY...

FINDING IT.

NOT ALL COPS ARE GOOD.

SO, CHERISH, AGAIN: WAS IT YOU?

DID YOU STEAL MY STASH?

LIKE OFFICER THOMAS RUSSELL.

WONDERING WHICH OF HIS "LADIES" CROSSED HIM.

NO, TOM, NOT ME...

...PLEASE...

BATTERING HIS WAY THROUGH THEM, ONE BY ONE.

NOW WHY DON'T I *BELIEVE* YOU, CHERISH? DO YOU THINK, MAYBE, IT'S 'CAUSE YOU'RE A DIRTY *TRAMP?*

WH...WHY, TOM? WHY ARE YOU *DOING...?*

BECAUSE, *CHERISH,* IF SOMEONE TAKES FROM ME...

...I'M *DAMN WELL* GONNA MAKE SURE I TAKE FROM THEM.

YOU REMEMBER THIS BELT, DON'T YOU?

BE... BEHIND YOU...

HUNGRYHUNGRY HUNGRYHUNGRY--

RANDOM BIT OF TRIVIA:

RIGHT, CHERISH. PULL THE OTHER ONE, WHY DON'T YOU?

CHOMP!

RATS DON'T JUST EAT CHEESE.

END INTERLUDE TWO.

CRAZY. This is--

--INSANE.

Felicia and the Doc are *SHREDDING* each other--

--and Felicia's *LOVING* it!

MMMEOW.

I've got to-- *HAVE TO*--pull it together.

Figure out what to do with Connors and the other--

RRRHHHHARRRR!

Oh, *SWELL.* Could this *POSSIBLY* get any--

HONEY-BUNNY?

Oh, no.

WHADDID I TELL YOU, MYRTLE?

I *TOLDJA* THEY'D BE ON THE ROOF.

Is that a rifle? Pointed at *ME?*

No, at my *GREEN PAL.*

BLAM!

WAIT-- HANG ON--

TWIST HIM. Twist him out of the line of--

...

And the scaly, *SQUIRMING* thing above me goes *LIMP.*

And warm blood starts *POOLING* around us.

The Doc *SEES* what's happened--

--stops trying to *EAT* Felicia--

--and lets out the most primal thing I've *EVER* heard.

ENOUGH!

THWIP

?

Great. *PERFECT.* Meantime--

--either Felicia doesn't *REALIZE* or *CARE*, but she's *WALING* on Connors.

STOP, CAT--

--STOP IT!!

And *WALING*--

--sending Connors *OFF* the roof.

NO!

OUT-- OUT OF THE WAY!

I...I...

THWIP

NO!

Lizards have *RUBBERY* bones--

EVIL EYE

--but something inside him still *BREAKS.*

Again, he *HOWLS.* Not out of pain--

--out of *ANGUISH.*

And then he does what he always does--

--and heads for the *SEWERS.*

SWELL. Because I haven't *TRUDGED* through industrial waste the last couple of months.

PETER... WHAT... WHAT...?

WHAT THE *HELL*, FELICIA? WHAT WERE YOU *THINKING?* WERE YOU *TRYING* TO KILL HIM?

I--I DON'T KNOW, I JUST COULDN'T *STOP*--

OBVIOUSLY.

YOU KNOW THAT'S A MAN IN THERE, RIGHT? A *FRIEND?*

WHO WAS TRYING TO *KILL* YOU!

AND YOU'RE *WELCOME*, BY THE WAY.

FOR WHAT?

FOR ME *SAVING YOU!* WH-- WH-- WHAT...

...WHAT'S *HAPPENING*, PETER? WHY DO I FEEL SO *ANGRY*...?

Me, too. Something is--

SPIDER-MAN...

YOU BETTER...GET SOME HELP.

I'M CALLING 911...

I HAD NO IDEA--DIDN'T KNOW--HE WAS JUST A...A...

Oh, no.

Oh, God.

WHO... WHO IS THAT?

WILLIAM CONNORS.

THIRTEEN YEARS OLD.

BLEEDING TO DEATH FROM A GUNSHOT WOUND.

NEXT: HUNTER'S MOON!

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ROBERTO AGUIRRE-SACASA • ANGEL MEDINA • SCOTT HANNA

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THIS BOY NEEDS MEDICAL ATTENTION! NOW!!!

WE ALL DO, ACTUALLY...

SUSAN AND REED RICHARDS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR:

SPIDER-MAN...?

THAT BOY. IS HE...?

I TRIED TO STOP THEM, SIR.

THE MAN IS SPIDER-MAN. THE WOMAN IS THE BLACK CAT. THE ROBOT IS H.E.R.B.I.E.

THE DYING CHILD IS BILLY CONNORS.

IT'S BEEN A HELL OF A NIGHT...

FERAL PART THREE: HUNTER'S MOON

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NEVER MIND.

LET'S JUST GET HIM INTO THE MED LAB.

PARDON MY ARM, LADIES.

THE BIO-BATH, SPIDER-MAN. CLOTHES AND ALL.

SUSAN?

IT'S POWERING UP, REED.

UHM, I KNOW YOU'RE A *GENIUS* AND I'M JUST A REFORMED SUPER-VILLAIN, DR. RICHARDS--

--BUT WON'T HE *DROWN* IN THERE?

THAT'S SUPER-*OXYGENATED*, SUPER-*ENRICHED*, SYNTHETICALLY-DISTILLED *AMNIOTIC FLUID*, MS. HARDY.

THE BOY'S IN AN ARTIFICIAL WOMB THAT'S *HEALING* HIM.

WHERE'D YOU GET IT, DOC? *TARGET?*

I'LL ASSUME THAT YOU'RE QUIPPING BECAUSE YOU'RE ANXIOUS, SPIDER-MAN.

THE BOY'S *VITALS* ARE STABILIZING, BY THE WAY. (IN CASE THAT WAS EVER IN *DOUBT.*) AND I'M ALSO PICKING UP TRACES OF...

...GOOD LORD.

THIS IS CURT CONNORS'S SON, ISN'T IT? THAT'S *HIS* BIO-RESTORATIVE SERUM IN THE BOY'S BLOOD-STREAM?

AFFIRMATIVE.

AREN'T THERE *FOUR* OF YOU, USUALLY?

BEN AND JOHNNY ARE AT THE SOUTH STREET SEAPORT...

"...*DEALING* WITH ONE OF THE MOLE MAN'S *PETS.*"

I WONDER IF THEY'RE *LINKED.*

IF *WHAT* ARE?

True confession: *SOMETIMES,* it's *NICE* not being the smartest guy in the room.

I'M ASSUMING THAT THE LIZARD HAS... *RESURFACED?*

HE HAS, YEP.

COUPLED WITH THE "*SUDDEN*" APPEARANCE OF THE MOLE MAN'S MONSTER...

ON TOP OF THE *SEEMINGLY* RANDOM OUTBREAKS OF VIOLENCE DISRUPTING THE CITY....

AND WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME. WHAT *I'M* FEELING...

CLASS: 6

C-6

WHAT, MS. HARDY?

RESTLESSNESS, DR. RICHARDS, AND... *APPETITE.* FEAR, RAGE, *BLOODLUST...*

LIKE *CLAWS* RIPPING AT MY INSIDES...

INTERESTING.

MS. HARDY, WHILE THE BOY HEALS, I'D LIKE TO RUN SOME TESTS ON YOU, AS WELL AS ON SPIDER-MAN.

ME? *MORE* TESTS?

I'M AFRAID SO...

"...THERE'S AN *EPIDEMIC* IN NEW YORK, AND I THINK YOU AND THE BLACK CAT--

"--AND OTHERS *LIKE* YOU--

"--MAY BE *PARTICULARLY* SUSCEPTIBLE."

AVENGERS TOWER.

I'M JUST CHECKING THE TEA, DEAR. IS THAT SWEET JOHN JAMESON HERE YET?

ON HIS WAY, MAY, IN THE ELEVATOR.

BUT NOT STAYING LONG.

DING!

THANKS FOR COMING BY WITH MY SCARF, JOHN, BUT NOW'S *NOT* A GOOD TIME.

GRRRRRRRR...

...RRARRRRRGGHH!!

JOHN JAMESON.

THE MAN-WOLF.

LICKING ITS CHOPS.

STAY--STAY IN THE KITCHEN, MAY!

DON'T-- DON'T COME OUT HERE!

?

RRRRRRRR...

JOHN... JOHN, ARE YOU IN THERE?

P-PLEASE, JOHN...

EHHNNNNUFFFF!

CRACKK!

PETER--

--CALL PETER!

RRRAARRGGH!

OH, GOD--!

EHHNNNUFFF!

OH, GOD, OH, GOD, OH, GOD, OH, GOD--

DON'T DO THIS, JOHN, PLEASE, *PLEASE* DON'T DO--

TEA'S READY.

URRRH?

ONE LUMP OR TWO?

CRASHH!

AARRRGGHHH!

MAY--

--OH, GOD--

--MAY--

KITCHEN, DEAR.

"SPIDER-MAN...?"

...IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT?

YOU *SPRANG* TO ATTENTION LIKE--

--SOMETHING'S *WRONG* BACK HOME.

I-I *FEEL* IT.

YOU CAN TELL FROM *HERE?* IS THIS ONE OF YOUR NEW POWERS?

...

KEEP WORKING ON BILLY AND THE CAT, DR. RICHARDS--

HEY.

"--I GOTTA HUSTLE AND FLOW."

MHHHRRRRRRRRRR...

DEFENSE SYSTEMS. THERE *MUST* BE DEFENSE SYSTEMS WE CAN--

--ALREADY ACTIVATED THEM, MY DEAR.

YOU *DID?*

BEFORE I GAVE JOHN JAMESON HIS *TEA.*

...

I DON'T *JUST* WANDER THESE HALLS DELIVERING *SAGE* ADVICE, MY DEAR.

HONESTLY, I'M SURPRISED MR. STARK'S ROBOTS HAVEN'T ALREADY--

SMASH

RARRGHH?

THESE DARTS?

THEY MEAN YOU'RE SEDATED.

FOOHP

FOOHP

HURRRH?

THREE... TWO...

THUDD!

THAT *HANDSOME* TONY STARK IS *SUCH* A CAUTION.

"CAUTION." RIGHT.

WE ARE *SO* MOVING.

IT'S ALL RIGHT, MRS. PARKER, MRS. **WATSON**-PARKER. YOUR **VISITOR** IS OFFICIALLY...

...WELL, LOOK AT HIM.

MAY, DON'T- DON'T--

OH, I'VE SEEN *WORSE* IN MY TIME, BELIEVE YOU ME.

HI, LADIES...

...SOMEONE WANNA TELL ME WHERE THE *NAKED GUY* CAME FROM?

THE BOWELS OF HELL.

THE NEW YORK SEWERS.

FLOODING FROM THE INCESSANT RAIN.

THE LIZARD.

RECOVERING FROM HIS SKIRMISH WITH THE BLACK CAT.

TORMENTED BY MEMORIES OF--

DAD? DADDY, IS THAT YOU?

...WRONG...ALL WRONG...

WHAT IS?

ALL THOSE YEARS...TRYING TO CURE MYSELF...

WHEN I SHOULD'VE BEEN...

...REMAKING YOU IN MY IMAGE...

DA...DADDY, WHAT ARE YOU...?

...GOING TO *CURE* YOU, BILLY...

...THE ROCK... THE *ROCK* TOLD ME TO...

WH... WHAT ROCK?

CLOSE... CLOSE YOUR EYES, BILLY, AND...

RRHHARRRRR!

THE ROAR--

--ECHOING THROUGH THE CATACOMBS--

--REACHING THE EARS OF:

VERMIN.

FEASTING ON OFFICER TOM RUSSELL.

NOT LIKING WHAT HE'S TASTING.

WONDERING IF THERE MIGHT NOT BE SOMETHING BETTER--

--ELSEWHERE.

SLOGGING HIS WAY THROUGH THE MUCK.

LIKE VERMIN--

--MOVING TOWARDS THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM.

TWO MONSTERS ON THE PROWL.

KRA-KOW!

This is pathetic. Whatever's wrong with me, I should be out there with Peter--

--not *WAITING* for that creepy Dr. Richards to keep poking and prodding me.

KNOCK KNOCK

FELICIA? MS. HARDY?

IF YOU'RE READY...

Sorry, Mrs. Invisible, but you and your husband should know...

...*CATS* don't like being confined.

"...I'M NOT KIDDING, MJ, FELICIA WOULD'VE KILLED CURT."

THE WAY HE ALMOST KILLED YOU? THE WAY JOHN JAMESON TRIED TO KILL US?

LOOK AT YOUR POOR SHOULDER...

IT'S OKAY.

I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT...

THE CITY? THE RIOTING? ALL THE VIOLENCE?

THAT, TOO.

BUT ALSO... *ME.* AFTER FELICIA ALMOST KILLED THE DOC, *I* WANTED TO KILL *HER.* LIKE, LITERALLY.

NO, I UNDERSTAND...

EARLIER TONIGHT, AFTER WE TALKED, I GOT... *FURIOUS,* PETER. AND WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING I'D DONE IT, I SUDDENLY HAD A *KNIFE* IN MY HANDS AND I WAS THINKING...

WHAT, MJ?

THEY WEREN'T NICE THOUGHTS, I CAN TELL YOU THAT MUCH... AND I'VE NEVER SEEN MAY FIGHT THE WAY SHE DID AGAINST JOHN.

I DON'T KNOW, TIGER, IT'S LIKE SOMETHING'S *HAPPENING* TO ALL OF US...

AND POOR DOC CONNORS IS GETTING THE *WORST* OF IT FOR WHATEVER REASON...

I MEAN, HE TURNED HIS SON INTO A *MONSTER,* MJ. WHAT WOULD MAKE A MAN *DO* THAT?

I DON'T KNOW...

AND NOW, IF HE THINKS BILLY'S BEEN HURT OR KILLED...

I GOTTA *FIND* HIM, MJ. I GOTTA FIND HIM AND FIGURE OUT WHAT THE HELL'S TAKING US *OVER...*

PETER, YOU'RE *HURT...*

...NOT THAT THAT'S *EVER* STOPPED YOU.

-SIGH-

YOU'RE A *MESS*, PETER. IF YOU'RE GONNA GO OUT, AT LEAST--

--WAY AHEAD OF YOU, GORGEOUS.

IF EVER THERE WAS AN OCCASION...

I'D MAKE SOME *CRACK* ABOUT TONY'S AESTHETICS, I'D SAY THAT THERE ARE OTHER COLORS IN THE RAINBOW *BESIDES* RED AND YELLOW, BUT THE TRUTH IS...

...IF YOU'RE GONNA *INSIST* ON GOING OUT AGAIN, I'D JUST AS SOON HAVE YOU *MORE* ARMORED THAN LESS.

PLUS...

...THESE EXTRA ARMS ARE PRETTY "HANDY", HUH?

OH, FOR GOD'S SAKE, YOU DORK, JUST...

"...GET GOING. AND...STAY SAFE, OKAY?"

I love that woman. I love that whatever I may be going through, she's *ALWAYS* there for me.

I love that I can be all like, "*Gotta go hunt the Lizard, honey!*" and she's all like, "*Have fun storming the castle, babe!*"

KRA-KOW!

Luckily, even though it's *METAL*, this new costume doesn't attract lightning. Luckily--

--I don't have far to go.

Normally, I'd track the doc using my spidey-sense, but with that outta whack...I need some ***EXTRASENSORY*** help.

The last time I talked to the ***X-MEN'S*** psychics, they told me my Aunt May was dead, so...thanks, but no thanks.

BESIDES, I heard through the grapevine that ***SHE'D*** set up shop again...

SPIDER-MAN... *RIGHT* ON SCHEDULE.

...and *YEP,* Madame Web sure has.

NEXT: VERMIN VERSUS THE LIZARD VERSUS SPIDEY!!

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ROBERTO AGUIRRE-SACASA ○ CLAYTON CRAIN

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CASSANDRA WEBB.

MADAME WEB.

CREEPY CLAIRVOYANT.

I SAW YOU *DIE*, SPIDER-MAN...

I SAW YOU DIE AND BE... *REBORN.*

FERAL PART FOUR: The Beast Within

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YEAH, I'VE...

...IT'S BEEN A *WEIRD* COUPLE OF WEEKS, MADAME WEB.

HNF.

AND YOUR COSTUME...?

GOT UPGRADED BY TONY STARK. HE THOUGHT--

--I *KNOW* WHAT HE THOUGHT, YOUNG MAN. BUT... DO *YOU?*

UHM... ACTUALLY? I DIDN'T *REALLY* COME HERE TO TALK ABOUT MY WARDROBE, MADAME WEB. I CAME--

--TO SEEK MY HELP IN FINDING YOUR FRIEND CURT CONNORS, *N'EST-CE PAS?*

"THAT AND...

"...REED RICHARDS IS WORKING ON THIS FROM A SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW, BUT..."

"...YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY ALL THE ANIMALS HAVE COME OUT TO PLAY?"

"THE VULTURE...

"THE LIZARD...

"L' HOMME-LOUP..."

"MAN-WOLF, YEAH..."

"AND THE BLACK CAT, YEAH.

AND...HE'S LIKE A *RAT*? A... *SHREW*?

...VERMIN? ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...?

...AND *YOU*. WHAT'S HAPPENING TO *YOU*, TOO.

"ANY IDEAS?"

EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED BY A *WEB*, SPIDER-MAN... YOU, MORE THAN ANY-ONE, SHOULD UNDER-STAND THAT...

INVISIBLE STRANDS THAT *LINK* EVERY LIVING THING TO EVERY *OTHER* LIVING THING...

THAT *JOIN* YOU TO ALL YOUR FOES...

BUT...THE TAPESTRY OF LIFE HAS BECOME...TAINTED, SPIDER-MAN. *POLLUTED*. AND YOU'RE ALL BECOMING...

ANGRY? *ANGRIER?*

FERAL, SPIDER-MAN. MORE...ANIMALISTIC. YOU *LESS SO* BECAUSE YOUR CORE NATURE IS... *DECENT*.

BUT EVENTUALLY... UNLESS YOU FIND THE SOURCE... YOU, AS WELL.

WHICH IS *WHERE*, MADAME WEB? THE SOURCE?

...*NO*, RIGHT NOW YOUR PLACE IS CHASING AFTER YOUR FRIEND...

GO WHERE NATURE'S *THICKEST* AND FIND THE LIZARD, SPIDER-MAN... AND THEN FOLLOW *HIM* TO THE INFECTION'S SOURCE.

Back in Midtown High, in mythology class, I learned that Cassandra was a blind prophetess who always spoke the truth.

Which means--for *ME*, in the *PRESENT*--that when Cassandra *WEBB* talks, *I* listen.

So I'm gliding towards *WHERE NATURE'S THICKEST*. Which, in New York City, has gotta be Central Park.

And...how *SWEET* is it that I can practically fly now?

(And not *THAT* weird since lots of spiders fly by *BALLOONING*. By spinning a thread that catches the wind and drags them up, up, up and away.)

Thank you, Tony Stark...

"...WHEREVER YOU ARE."

Couldn't stay in the Baxter Building with that CREEPY Reed Richards. Even though he WAS trying to help me. And even though it feels like--

--like my GUTS are on fire.

Like if I don't KILL AND EAT SOMETHING soon--

OH, GOD--

--it's going to get very, VERY ugly.

HEY, CAT...

WHO?

...DON'T FIGHT IT. YOU'LL LOSE. TRUST ME AND... FIGHT ME.

P-PUMA?

YOU... YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...

NO, I DO, CAT. THAT'S WHY I'M SAYING: FIGHT ME AND GET IT OUT OF YOUR SYSTEM.

WHERE... WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?

WH... WHY?

I'VE BEEN *TRACKING* YOU, CAT. I *SMELLED* YOU AND I STARTED TRACKING YOU... *THIRTEEN* BLOCKS AGO.

I PICKED UP THE SCENT OF YOUR *FEAR*... YOUR ANGER...

RELEASE IT BEFORE YOU DO SOMETHING *TERRIBLE*.

WHAT?

N...*NO*.

YOU WANT TO.

DO IT.

NO. I--

I'M *TELLING* YOU. JUST--

RAAOOH!

...

=PANT=
=PANT=
=PANT=

THERE. DOESN'T IT ALL FEEL...LESS DESPERATE NOW?

YE...

...YES.

THAT CALM WILL LAST FOR AWHILE, BUT THEN...

WHATEVER'S DOING THIS TO US, CAT, IT *BUILDS UP* IN OUR SYSTEMS...

"...AND THE ONLY WAY TO GET RID OF THE ANGER IS TO *ACT* ON IT."

CURIOUS.

WHAT IS?

YOU, JOHN, NORMALLY BECAME THE MAN-WOLF--

THIS IS NO "*NORMALLY*," DR. RICHARDS--

--BUT WHEN IT HAPPENS, IT'S BECAUSE AN ALIEN ***GEM-STONE*** TRIGGERS THE TRANSFORMATION.

AND YOU, BILLY, BECAME A SMALLER VERSION OF THE LIZARD THANKS TO A ***SERUM*** YOUR FATHER INJECTED INTO YOUR CIRCULATORY SYSTEM.

I GUESS.

AND YET...

...UPON CLOSE INSPECTION (*AND REMEMBERING MY STUDY OF PALEONEUROLOGY IN HIGH SCHOOL*), IT'S OBVIOUS THAT BOTH OF YOUR RESPECTIVE ***HINDBRAINS*** HAVE BEEN AFFECTED. THAT YOUR ***PROTOREPTILIAN BRAINS*** HAVE BECOME ENLARGED, TAKING OVER FUNCTIONS NORMALLY CONTROLLED BY YOUR CEREBRUMS.

MEANING ***WHAT***, DOCTOR?

MEANING...*NEITHER* OF YOU MIGHT BE ENTIRELY RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ACTIONS, MR. JAMESON. MEANING...SOMETHING *OUTSIDE* EACH OF YOU IS AGGRAVATING YOUR...PARTICULAR CONDITIONS.

FASCINATING.

THE ENZYMES YOUR HINDBRAINS ARE RELEASING INTO YOUR BODIES...

...*WAIT.* WAIT, WAIT, WAIT, WAIT.

WHAT, DARLING?

...

SORRY, SUE, CONNECTING DOTS HERE.

IT *IS* WHAT YOU DO BEST...

THE BAXTER BUILDING'S PROTECTED. *INSULATED.* THAT'S WHY *WE'RE* OKAY AND THE REST OF THE CITY'S...

RADIATION.

RADIATION WOULD AFFECT EVERYONE, TO GREATER OR LESSER DEGREES. BUT IT WOULD AFFECT *THEM* FIRST AND WORST...

"...THE MONSTERS."

MY TRIBE MADE ME INTO WHAT I AM. YEARS AGO. ALTERED MY BODY AND TURNED ME INTO THIS...*THING.*

WHICH I HAD--

--BELIEVE ME--

--I HAD IT UNDER *CONTROL.*

UNTIL...?

I CAME TO NEW YORK ON BUSINESS...

...I'M A BILLIONAIRE, DID YOU KNOW THAT?

I WAS MEETING FIREHEART ENTERPRISES' BOARD...

"MY CHAIRMAN WAS DRONING ON AND ON...

"I WAS TRYING TO LISTEN, TO *CONCENTRATE...*

"HIS WORDS WERE BECOMING *SCREAMS* AND I COULD FEEL MYSELF BECOMING...

"LIKE I WANTED TO LEAP ACROSS THE TABLE AND...AND...

"...AND *THAT'S* WHEN I LOOKED DOWN AT MY HANDS.

"I HAD *SECONDS*, A MINUTE...

"IT HAD BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME, AND THE *PAIN*...

"THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF *HAIRS* BURSTING THROUGH MY SKIN AT ONCE...*BONES* ELONGATING, *MUSCLES* THICKENING...

"AND THEN...

"...THE *HUNGER*..."

...

I TORE THAT MUTT TO PIECES, CAT. BUT AFTERWARDS? I COULD *THINK* AGAIN. I STARTED HEADING UPTOWN AND... PICKED UP YOUR SCENT ON THE WAY.

UPTOWN? THAT'S WHERE *I* WAS GOING, PUMA. I DON'T KNOW WHY, I JUST *WAS*...

WE'RE BEING *DRAWN* THERE, CAT. LIKE *FLIES* TO ROTTEN MEAT...

"WE'RE *ALL OF US* BEING PULLED THERE..."

THE LIZARD.

BEYOND REASON NOW.

ACTING WHOLLY ON INSTINCT.

FEELING ONLY ONE THING:

NEED.

COMPLETELY UNAWARE THAT HE ISN'T ALONE.

COMPLETELY UNAWARE THAT HE IS BEING--

--STALKED.

BY VERMIN.

HALF-MAN, HALF-RAT.

THE LOWEST OF THE LOW.

YOU EVER SEE A RAT FIGHT?

IT ISN'T PRETTY.

ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S RABID.

ESPECIALLY WHEN ALL IT FEELS IS--

HUNGRY.

HUNGRYHUNGRY HUNGRYHUNGRY.

ON THE ONE HAND, SOME DARK, HIDDEN PART OF THE LIZARD THINKS:

"GIVE IN. LET GO. GIVE UP."

(IT ISN'T EVEN AWARE OF THESE THOUGHTS.)

ON THE OTHER HAND, IT THINKS-- REMEMBERS--

AND ITS WILL TO LIVE--TO SURVIVE--

--SURGES BACK.

R.R.R.A.A.A.R.R.R.!!

UUURRRAAAHHRRR!!

And scenes like *THIS*, ladies and gentlemen...

...are why I need to get me some new friends.

SOMEWHERE, THERE'S A ONE-LINER ABOUT ME "*CRASHING THIS LITTLE PARTY.*"

OR IS THAT TOO OBVIOUS?

AND NOT TO NITPICK, BUT WEREN'T YOU *DEAD?*

EITHER WAY, I GOTTA TELL YOU--

--YOUR *BODY ODOR?* GETTING TO BE A PROBLEM.

AGAIN, I KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING APPROPRIATELY CHEESY FOR ME TO SAY HERE...

GET IT, "*CHEESY*"? AS IN RATS LIKE--

RRRRRRAARR!!!

--DOC, HI!!

YOU'RE WONDERING ABOUT MY NEW LOOK?

BARGH

YOU'RE THINKING: "SO LAST SEASON."

YOU'RE THINKING: "SO OTTO OCTAVIUS."

YOU'RE THINKING: "WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH BLUE AND RED?"

BUT I'M HERE TO TELL YOU--

MRRAAGGHH!

I KNEW Vermin was gonna do that.

LUNGE at me.

See, this is all part of my master plan.

That I would use the momentum from Vermin's *"sneak attack"*--

--and have it carry us over--

--and *INTO* the lake.

More than anything, what these guys need is a *COLD SHOWER.*

And now that *I* can breathe underwater--

--(thank you, Mr. Stark)--

--you might as well call me the *Spider-Mariner.*

...

I gotta admit, I was a *LITTLE* skeptical of these extra arms--

--but they're certainly *CONVENIENT.*

Okay, now let's see if Madame Web's still got it.

Let's see if coming after the doc will, indeed, lead me to the...

...the...

WHOA.

If *THAT'S* not the "*source of the infection*"...

...I'm a monkey's uncle.

SSSSSSPIDER-MAN. WELCOME TO THE FUTURE...

DR. VINCENT STEGRON?

TO BE CONCLUDED...

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ROBERTO AGUIRRE-SACASA ○ ANGEL MEDINA ○ SCOTT HANNA

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THE PAST.

THE ARCTIC CIRCLE.

FROM THE JOURNALS OF DR. VINCENT STEGRON:

Do you believe everything happens for a reason?

As a scientist, I should reject notions of fate and pre-destination, but... experience teaches me otherwise.

I left civilization to escape the world of men and mammals...

After suffering defeat at the hands of Spider-Man and his warm-blooded compatriots, I exiled myself to the edge of the world...

...looking, I think, for death.

Instead, I found...

FERAL PART FIVE: The ROCK of LIFE

ROBERTO AGUIRRE-SACASA	ANGEL MEDINA	SCOTT HANNA	AVALON'S DAN KEMP	CORY PETIT
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...the rock of life.

Have you ever heard about the prime asteroid? From which life first sprang?

Whose physical properties changed over time, eventually triggering the great ice age?

The story goes--

--pieces of that asteroid still exist. And give off a radiation that disrupts the very laws of nature and science. That can, in fact, reverse the evolutionary process.

I now know...

...all the stories? They're true.

The irony wasn't lost on me as I trudged across the ice:

That I, who had once dreamed of bringing the thunder lizards back to life...

...who dreamed of turning the modern world's most fetid, congested metropolis into a primordial, prehistoric utopia...

...I, Vincent Stegron, had literally stumbled across the answer to my every waking wish.

...

Everything happens for a reason...

...even to an also-ran like me.

The trip across the sea, back to New York, was quiet and uneventful.

(And short enough that I only ate three of my fellow travelers.)

I sent the rock of life to my old colleague, geologist Richard Treyman.

No note, no return address.

A Trojan Horse, hand-delivered to the Museum of Natural History.

HELLO, CONNORS? I WAS WONDERING IF YOU MIGHT TAKE A LOOK AT THIS *ASTEROID* I HAVE DOWN HERE.

...

YES, CURT, I REALIZE YOU'RE A BIOLOGIST, BUT *STILL*...

I waited, then.

Waited until...

...the rains came and the asteroid's radiation started to *seep out* across the city...

...and things began to change... devolve...

...and it was time to claim my kingdom.

STEGRON, YOU NUT-JOB!!! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO US??

CRASSH!

FIRSSSST THE ANIMALSSSS, SPIDER-MAN...

The monkeys and rhinos at the zoo that killed themselves.

THEN THE MONSTERSSSS...

Man-Wolf. Vermin. The Lizard.

THEN THE MAMMALSSS LIKE YOU...

UHNF!

Me and the Black Cat, yeah.

(Man, that hurt.)

THEN EVERYONE ELSSSSE...

The whole city, going nuts.

And none crazier than--

IMAGINE A WORLD OF REPTILESSSS, SSPIDER-MAN...

DON'T NEED TO, STEGGY, THAT'S WHY GOD MADE ROGER CORMAN MOVIES.

THWIP

THWIP

BUT WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW IS? MAMMALS?

WE'RE *NEVER* GOING AWAY.

RHEE

Uh, wait. Is that a *RAPTOR?* Coming at me? Is that a--?

SO. AS I WAS SAYING--

HEY, where'd Stegron go???

OUTSIDE.

THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

THE RAT AND THE REPTILE.

VERMIN AND THE LIZARD.

DUMB, STUPID ANIMALS TRYING TO KILL EACH OTHER.

THEY WOULD, TOO--

--IF NOT FOR THE TWO OTHER ANIMALS NEARBY.

ARRRGH!

WHICH DO YOU *WANT*, PUMA?

CLAWS OR NO CLAWS, I'M STILL A *GENTLEMAN*, CAT--

--YOU TAKE YOUR PICK.

SINCE DOC CONNORS AND I WERE *INTERRUPTED* LAST TIME--

--AND I HAVE A *THING* AGAINST RATS--

LOUD AND CLEAR, CAT.

??

WE ALMOST KILLED EACH OTHER LAST TIME, DOC, BUT THAT *DOESN'T* HAVE TO HAPPEN AGAIN. YOU'RE BASICALLY A GOOD GUY. YOU *CAN* FIGHT WHAT'S HAPPENING TO US. YOU CAN--

URRAAHHGGHH!!!

OR NOT.

HUNNFF!!

CRACKK!

OUCH.

PLEASE, DR. CONNORS. *PLEASE* TELL ME YOU'RE--

--DOWN FOR THE COUNT? LOOKS LIKE.

SAME AS VERMIN.

THAT WAS... EFFICIENT.

THEY WERE ALREADY *EXHAUSTED*, CAT...

"...AND WE DON'T HAVE ANY TIME TO WASTE."

Ironically, I'm in the *HALL OF INSECTS* now, playing...

...I mean, I'm actually *PLAYING HIDE-AND-SEEK* with a man who's half-dinosaur.

If I weren't such a *SCIENCE GEEK*, I'd be seriously--

--WAIT.

Something *SHUFFLING* over...

OH... MY...

HUHR?

HURAGHH!!!

WHOA.

This is TRICKY. Whoever this guy is--

--(probably someone who works at the museum)--

URARGGHH??

I just have to CONTAIN him.

URRHHHDDD!

THUD!

--I CAN'T hurt him.

And hope that his transformation--

THWIP THWIP

--can be REVERSED.

UHRRGAHHH...

--(DEVOLUTION, actually)--

AND THAT ISSS MEANT TO BE THE DOMINANT SSSPECIESSS?

STUPID. My spider-sense is still--

THWACK!

FOR THAT DROOLING MESSSSS, REPTILESSSS SSSHOULD ROLL OVER AND PLAY DEAD???

THE MORE MAMMALSSS DEVOLVE, SSSPIDER-MAN--

--THE MORE PATHETIC THEY GET.

THE MORE *REPTILESS* DEVOLVE, THE SSSTRONGER--THE MORE SSSUPERIOR-- *WE* GET.

Oh, God. I gotta end this but *FAST*. Stegron is actually starting to make--

SPIDER-MAN?

Wha-what *NOW?*

...PROFESSOR RICHARDS?

AFFIRMATIVE, SON, TALKING TO YOU THROUGH YOUR COSTUME.

OKAY, THAT'S... COOL.

THAT'S TONY STARK, BUT LISTEN TO ME: TAPPING INTO YOUR SUIT'S SYSTEMS, I CAN "SEE" YOU FIGHTING STEGRON. BUT HE'S NOT THE PROBLEM; HE'S A *SYMPTOM* OF THE PROBLEM.

HATE TO DISAGREE WITH YOU, PROF, BUT STEGGY IS VERY MUCH--

KER-RASHHHH!!

--A *PROBLEM!!!*

NEVERTHELESS, WITH THESE *FISTICUFFS*, ALL YOU'RE DOING IS *ENABLING*. FORGET VINCENT STEGRON FOR THE MOMENT--

BE THRILLED TO, BUT--

NO *BUTS*. YOUR NEW SUIT HAS CAMOUFLAGE CAPABILITIES. *USE THEM*.

Right. Like I can just--

--oh, wow, I actually *CAN* just think it and it happens.

SSSSSSPIDER-MAN. COME OUT, COME OUT, COME OUT, SSSSO I CAN *EAT* YOU...

Luckily, dinosaurs have--had--(*whatever*)-- notoriously bad senses of smell, so...

...I guess not *EVERYTHING* has to be about beating each other silly.

GOOD WORK. NOW I NEED YOU TO GO **THREE FLOORS DOWN**, EXACTLY FROM WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT THIS SECOND.

HOW COME, DOC?

THESE ***LONER*** SUPER HEROES...ALL THEY DO IS ASK ***QUESTIONS.***

BECAUSE, SPIDER-MAN, THIS THING THAT'S THROWING NEW YORK'S BIO- AND ECOSYSTEMS INTO CHAOS? THE ***SOURCE*** OF THE RADIATION? MY READINGS INDICATE...

"...YOU'RE RIGHT ON TOP OF IT."

I don't know what I was expecting, but...

This close to the "source," shouldn't I be going ***INSANE*** with rage? Shouldn't I be ***COMPLETELY*** feral?

Unless...

Dr. Richards used the word radiation...

And my new costume's made of "smart" *LIQUID* metal...

I wonder if...

WHOA.

Yet again, this new suit reacts at the speed of *THOUGHT.*

That's it, baby.

Wrap around the meteorite nice and *TIGHT.* Insulate the hell out of it.

HEY, DR. RICHARDS, YOU THERE? I THINK I FOUND WHAT WAS GIVING OFF THE RADIATION YOU WERE--

SKRRRT!!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE???

UH-OH.

THE ROCK OF LIFE--WHAT DID YOU DO TO IT????

I...

WAIT, WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "ROCK OF LIFE"?

MY GIFT TO THE WORLD--

"YOUR"...?

HOLD UP. *YOU* BROUGHT THAT ROCK TO NEW YORK?

TO RETURN IT TO WHAT IT ONCE *WASSS*...

SO THAT REPTILES MAY *ASSSCEND*...

YOU...

OH, GOD, DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY *LIVES* YOU'VE RUINED?

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE *DIED* BECAUSE OF THIS THING?

...ALL MY *DREAMSSSS*...

RICHARDS WAS WRONG; YOU'RE *NOT* A *SYMPTOM*, YOU'RE--

--YOU'RE *INSANE*!!

YOU'RE-- NOTHING!!!

THACK!

THK!

A COLD-BLOODED NOTHING THAT SHOULDN'T EVEN BE BREATHING.

REALITY CHECK, STEGRON. IT'S NOT MAMMALS OR REPTILES THAT RULE THE WORLD--

--IT'S SPIDERS!!!

--PLEASSSSSE--

I COULD, YOU KNOW. CRIPPLE YOU FOR LIFE. BLAME THE ASTEROID, THE RADIATION. NO ONE WOULD CARE. EVEN *JAMESON* WOULD PRAISE ME...

...DON'T...

...BUT IT'S NOT IN MY *NATURE.*

I'M *NOT* AN ANIMAL.

SPIDER-MAN...

...WHATEVER YOU DID, LOVERBOY, IT'S *OVER.*

THINGS ARE CHANGING BACK TO WHAT THEY WERE, AND WE'RE...

...THE *ANGER* INSIDE US IS GONE.

...MY BEAUTIFUL, *BEAUTIFUL* WORLD...

ALL BECAUSE OF A ROCK, DR. STEGRON.

ALL THIS INSANITY...

...AND FOR WHAT, ULTIMATELY? NOTHING.

ALMOST AS IF ON CUE...

...THE RAIN STOPS, THE STORM CLEARS.

THE ROCK OF LIFE IS CONTAINED...

...THE SLEEPING WOLF IS RELEASED...

...THE CATS ENJOY A LATE-NIGHT...

...SAUCER OF MILK...

...THE RAT CONTEMPLATES ITS LATEST TRAP...

...AND A FATHER AND SON REUNITE.

CODA:

YOU DID GOOD TONIGHT, TIGER. REALLY, REALLY GOOD.

DID I?

I DON'T KNOW, MJ...

...THINGS STILL FEEL VERY, VERY WRONG IN THE WORLD.

COMIX

"AS WELL THEY SHOULD, SPIDER-MAN..."

CASSANDRA WEBB'S APARTMENT.

THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE.

...YOUR LIFE, SUCH AS IT IS...

...IS ABOUT TO GET MUCH, MUCH MORE COMPLICATED.

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